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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AORC IMO
SUBJECT: ACCREDITATION - IMO - NINETY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION COUNCIL, LONDON, JUNE
25 - 29, 2007

REF: SECSTATE 70883

¶1. Embassy London has requested accreditation and is pleased
to grant UK country clearance to the following delegation
members from June 25 - 29, 2007 for the International
Maritime Organization Council's Ninety-Eighth Session:

Head of Delegation

Laurence Tobey
Transportation Affairs Officer
Office of Technical Specialized Agencies
Bureau of International Organization Affairs
Department of State

Alternate Head of Delegation

Jeffrey G. Lantz
Director of National and International Standards
Coast Guard
Department of Homeland Security

Advisors

William A. Meara
Counselor, Environment, Science and Technology
United States Embassy
London

William Paton
Counselor, Environment, Science and Technology
United States Embassy
London

¶2. The Transportation Security Administration has updated
security measures in place after the August 10, 2006 civil
aviation security threat. Travelers may now carry through
security checkpoints travel-size toiletries (3 ounces or
less) that fit comfortably in ONE, QUART-SIZE, clear plastic,
zip-top bag. After clearing security, travelers can now
bring beverages and other items purchased in the secure
boarding area on-board aircraft. In addition, larger amounts
of prescription liquid medications, baby formula and diabetic
glucose treatments will be permitted, but must be declared at
the checkpoint for additional screening. Please read current
travel restrictions and review the list of prohibited items
prior to travel:

<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assist.asp>. This
security regimen applies to all domestic and international
flights departing U.S. airports. For flights originating in
the United Kingdom, local policies requiring only one
carry-on bag apply. The liquids ban remains in effect. As
these policies are more stringent than United States policy,
travelers should check with transportation security
authorities for flights originating at non-U.S. airports.

13. Embassy Control Officer is Senior EST Officer William Meara, Tel. (44) 20-7894-0969; Fax: (44) 20-7409-1637, email MearaWR@state.gov. Upon arrival, please call the Embassy (020 7894-0704 or 020 794 0238) to confirm UK contact and telephone details so that travelers can be reached in case of emergency.

14. Chancery Access:

If visitor requires unescorted access to the chancery, please send level of security clearance via cable, as required by 12 FAM 443.3.

15. As noted in reftel, no Embassy assistance is required.

16. Hotel Check-In:

Please note that the check-in time at all London hotels is 1400. Early check-in can be requested but can only be guaranteed if the room is reserved and paid for from the night prior to arrival. Check-out time is generally 1200. Please also note that the hotel will require a credit card on check-in. Travelers may pay on departure with cash. Travelers are advised against exchanging money at the hotel, as the much less favorable rate of exchange may push the room rate over London's per diem.

17. Changes/Cancellation of Reservations:

Any changes to hotel reservations must be made 48 hours in advance of arrival. Changes made after that time may incur a night's lodging charge. Please make all changes through your control officer and not directly with the hotel.

18. Accommodation Exchange:

ATMs are widely available in London and accept most major U.S. ATM cards. ATM and credit card transactions obtain the best available exchange rates. Exchange services are available from well-known firms at the airports and train stations. In addition, Citibank has established a bank in the embassy where official TDYers can exchange U.S. dollars for British Pounds Sterling (BPS) during Citibank office hours for limited amounts. U.S. citizen direct-hire TDYers may cash personal checks; all others should bring cash or traveler's checks.

19. VISA:

U.S. citizens do not require a visa, only a valid passport. Requirements for entry to the UK of citizens from other countries vary. Non-U.S. citizen visitors should check with their local British consulate to determine visa requirements.

10. Electronic devices:

Privately-owned laptops and personal computers are prohibited in controlled access areas (CAAs) of the embassy and consulates. Travelers with USG unclassified and classified laptop or notebook computers should review 95STATE 244394 (classified machines) and 95STATE 24382 (unclassified machines) and notify the Regional Security Office before bringing these machines into a CAA. Cellular telephones and BlackBerrys are also prohibited in the CAA and must be left outside this area. Questions concerning other types of electronic devices may be directed to the Regional Security Office.

11. Health Concerns:

The embassy medical unit, located on the Lower Ground Floor, has daily walk-in sick call from 0830-1000. TDY personnel are welcome to seek medical consultation for acute illness or other medically-related concerns at the unit.

12. Security Information for the United Kingdom:

Our current threat assessment indicates there are no known direct immediate security problems that would affect travel to mainland UK. Travelers planning to stay longer than 30 days are required to schedule a security briefing with the RSO. For additional threat assessment information regarding the United Kingdom and/or Europe, you may contact DS/ITA in the State Department at (202) 663-0787.

-- Terrorism. The United Kingdom is stable and modern, but shares with the rest of the world an increased threat of terrorist incidents of international origin, as was shown with the bombing attack in London July 7, 2005. Visitors are reminded to remain vigilant with regard to their personal security and to exercise caution at all times. The British Home Secretary has urged its citizens to be alert and vigilant by, for example, keeping an eye out for suspect packages or people acting suspiciously at Underground and railway stations and airports, and reporting anything suspicious to the appropriate authorities by contacting the free anti-terrorist telephone hotline on 0800-789-321. Travelers should regularly monitor the Department's internet web site at <http://travel.state.gov> where the current Worldwide Caution Public Announcement can be found. In addition, if visitors notice any suspicious activity or have any security concerns, the embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO) should be notified as soon as possible.

From time to time during periods of heightened threat of terrorism, the UK government deems it necessary to raise levels of security activity. Heightened activity may include the use of troops, who remain at all times under the control of the police and are part of long-standing contingency plans. Military personnel and equipment may be deployed at airports and other transportation links, or other public locations. For more information about UK safety initiatives, consult the UK Civil Contingencies Secretariat website at www.ukresilience.gov.uk.

Political demonstrations are well policed and, except at times in Northern Ireland, generally orderly. Although the political situation in Northern Ireland has dramatically improved since the signing of the Good Friday Agreements in 1998, incidents of terrorist violence have, nevertheless, occurred in the past few years. Within Northern Ireland, flash-points for sectarian confrontations still exist, but they are generally removed from areas where tourists congregate. Sporadic incidents of street violence often erupt during the summer marching season around the July 12 public holiday. As a result, American citizens traveling in Northern Ireland have experienced delays and disruption.

-- Street Crime: London, like other urban centers, has a certain amount of street crime. Although on the increase, violent criminal confrontations and the use of firearms are relatively rare in the UK. Burglars and pickpockets are very active and visitors are encouraged to safeguard their valuables and not carry large amounts of cash or unneeded credit cards. Visitors should be particularly careful on crowded streets, in entertainment areas, in department stores, restaurants, or on crowded public transportation. Travelers are specifically warned not to leave valuables in hotel rooms, regardless of the stature of the hotel. Recently there has been a measurable increase in street crimes involving the theft of cell phones. Visitors should avoid as much as possible using cell phones on the streets or in other public places. The police and other emergency services in the UK are excellent. The nationwide telephone number to summon emergency assistance is 999.

113. London Airport Arrival Information:

-- Heathrow Airport: The best way to get from Heathrow to Central London is to take the Heathrow Express train. It leaves every fifteen minutes from all Heathrow terminals. Travel time is fifteen minutes to London's Paddington Station. Service operates from 0510 to 2347 daily. The cost is 14.50 pounds one-way if ticket is purchased from a kiosk prior to boarding, or 16.50 pounds when purchased aboard the train. Paddington Station is about a ten-minute taxi ride to central London. Taxi (black) cab service is also available from Heathrow to central London and the fare ranges from 60-100 pounds, but could exceed that, depending on traffic conditions. (Prices as of March, 2006)

-- Gatwick Airport: The best way to get to Central London is to take the Gatwick Express train, which operates every 15

minutes between Gatwick Airport South Terminal and London's Victoria Station. Access from Gatwick's North to South Terminal is via free monorail train. Journey time from Gatwick to Victoria Station is approximately 30 minutes and the service operates four times an hour from 0500 to 0135 daily. Fare is 14 pounds one-way and 25 pounds round-trip when purchased prior to boarding. A two pound surcharge is added when purchased aboard the train. Victoria Station is about a fifteen-minute taxi ride from the hotels. Taxi travel from Gatwick to Central London is extremely expensive and time-consuming.

U.S. Embassy London Website:

Please visit our website for additional information:
<http://london.usembassy.gov>. Embassy London looks forward to your visit.

Visit London's Classified Website:

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/london/index.cfm>

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